

A SHORT SKETCH OF THE TRIBES OF BHUTTEANAH AND HURRIANAH;*
—by PETER A. MINAS, G. M. C. B., *Honorary Assistant Surgeon;*
in Civil Medical charge of the Hissar District.

[Received 10th April, 1866.]

In connection with the recommendation of Dr. J. Fayrer, regarding ethnological exhibition, I have compiled the accompanying laconic sketch of the tribes of Bhutteanah and Hurrianah. In it is embodied all the information that I could collect during my leisure hours. It is a mere attempt and naturally very short, but it may guide others who will have an opportunity of visiting the same districts, and who are desirous to work out their ethnology.

Baniahs.

بنیا—बनिया.

Origin.—The origin of this tribe is blended into obscurity, but the following is the traditional account: that one, Oogur Sein, a Powar Rajpoot of the Chunderbansee division, took for a wife an Ahir† woman; she bore him 17 sons, and each son became the head of a tribe,

Division into Classes.—The Baniahs are divided into 6 *goths*‡ viz. Aghorwall, Mahasurree, Uswall, Khuttree, Mahar, and Rorah.

The Aborigines of Agroha,—a village 12 miles north of Hissar—the descendants of Oogur Sein are spread far and wide, each as a distinct tribe, and one cannot intermarry with the other.

The Aghorwall is considered the highest in order, and the Rorah the lowest, for the latter eat meat and drink spirits.

Each caste has its *purihit*.§ The Aghorwall can become *Surrowgee*, a sect very austere in the ceremonies of religion; they do not eat or

* The MSS. of this paper was accompanied by a series of photograms, representing members of the various tribes. It would be too costly to reproduce them, but the original copies are deposited in the Archives of the Society, and can be inspected by any one interested in the subject.—ED.

† अहिर—अहौर, a caste whose business is to attend to cows; a cowherd caste. Wilson, in his glossary, gives a full account of this tribe.

‡ गोत्र—गोत्र, pedigree, species, caste, or tribe.

§ पुरोहित—पुरोहित, a family priest, who presides at the performance of religious ceremonies.

drink after sunset; avoid injuring or destroying insects or animals, as far as possible.

Habit.—Settled.

Habitat.—The Baniahs are scattered over every village in the North-Western Provinces, and in the largest commercial towns of Bengal and the Punjab. The cities of Sirsa and Hissar are chiefly inhabited by them.

Occupation.—The chief pursuit is commerce.

Religion.—Hindus, and followers of Vishnu.

Character.—Sly, submissive and very parsimonious. Peaceful, timid, and particularly usurious. Intelligent, can read and write, and enterprising in trade.

Diet.—Vegetables, milk, and clarified butter, and confectionaries.

Narcotic.—Only tobacco is smoked in hukas.

Longevity.—About 60 years.

Physical Conformation.—Some have dark, others light yellow or coppery complexion. Many shave their heads, and wear a *chonti*;* others allow their hair to grow. They also shave their beard and allow their moustache to grow. Some are spare built, but the richer class are generally *embonpoint*. Their average height is 5 feet 4 inches.

Dress. *Dhotee*,† turban of red colour, but of yellow spotted with red, is worn in the spring season, and chudder; on public occasions, silk, plain or brocaded, velvet shawls, &c. are used. Young lads are seen covered with ear-rings, neck chains, armlets, &c. As a mark of distinction, both social and religious, a circular, and several transverse marks are made on the forehead with sandal wood paste, and vermilion.

Bagrees.

बागरी—वागरी.

Origin.—The origin is obscure. The Bagrees are allied to Jauts.

Division into Classes.—There is no division of this tribe known.

Habit.—Migratory.

* *چونٹی*—*चांटी*, a tuft of hair left at the top of the head, and all the rest is shaved off.

† *دهوٹی*—*धाती*, cloth worn round the waist, passing between the legs and fastened behind.

Habitat.—They are chiefly seen towards the desert tract of Bicaner territory, but are also found in the Bhutteanah district from Jamaul to Bicaner, and also in the Hissar district.

Occupation.—Agriculturists, and they also let cattle on hire.

Religion.—Hindus.

Character.—Peaceful, timid, and industrious in their field avocations.

Diet.—Vegetarian. Although animal food is not prohibited, yet they refrain from its indulgence for penurious purposes. Amongst this class, except millet seeds—lentil—no other kind of food is *relished*; this is either eaten separately or mixed, the latter mode is preferred during the hot season only, and is called *rabri*,* which is prepared by mixing with water a sufficient quantity of salt, and boiled. It is eaten by the rich either with ghee, or, by the poor, with *lussee*.†

Longevity.—About 80 years.

Use of Narcotics.—The Bagrees smoke tobacco by fixing a *tawa*‡ or *ghutteeah* in a chillum, then cover with lighted dried dung of camel or cow. They also use the country spirit, and take it medicinally in Catarrhus, Pleuritis, Pneumonia, and after confinement.

Physical Conformation.—They are of a dark complexion, slender in form, hair black, and wear moustache and beard.

Dress.—The males wear dhotee, white turban, merzai, and a chudder. The females wear ghugrah§ and chudder of wool, either black or red coloured, with a narrow border of some other dye, but generally dotted red, and ungeeah|| after marriage.

Bhuttees.

भट्टी—بهتتی.

Origin.—A portion of the inhabitants of Jesselmeer emigrated during the reign of Allahoodeen Garee, King of Delhi, and settled in a place, where a *bhat*¶ only resided,—and in compliment to the bard, the place was denominated Bhatneer, - and called themselves Bhattees. Here they formed a powerful colony, and continued to be governed

* رابری—रावड़ी, pap, or porridge.

† लसी—लसो, milk, whey.

‡ نوا, a tile.

§ گھگھرا, petticoat or skirt.

|| انگیا, boddice or stays.

¶ بهات—भात, a family bard.

under the authority of the kings of Delhi. They extended their power, and at last secured the tract of land, which derived its name, and retains to this day after them, Bhutteana.

The Bhuttees are also called Pachaddas, which word is a mere corruption of Pacheemabad, meaning, inhabitants or people of the West, so designated by the inhabitants of Delhi.

Division into Classes.—The Bhuttee caste is divided into 2 *thoks*,* viz. Kulloka and Bhanaku; these are sub-divided into Joiah, Mendival, Luckwarrah, Bherayka, and Wuttoo.

They first settled on the banks of the Sutledge, and finally located at Sookchain, a village 11 miles north of Sirsa. One of their chief Jodh, settled in a village which was named after him Jodhka; Begoo established another village after his name.

Originally, a Chowhan Rajpoot was the first of the Bhanaka party, who settled in Bhutteanah district during the time of Nabob Nussoor Khan, the 11th in descent, and established 3 villages viz. Khyrika, Boodhabhana, and Bunseedhurree.

There are altogether 7 villages now existing in the Sirsa pergunnah of this clan, a few in the Roree pergunnah, but the majority live in the Puttealah states. Besides the above mentioned, there are other subdivisions viz. *Jhorurs*, originally Rajpoots, who came from Bhutenda, the *Khurrul*, *Jugrah*, and *Goodharah*.

The previous habit of Bhuttees.—It is said that the Bhuttee population has much diminished since the establishment of British rule, as the pursuits of husbandry are not in accordance with their taste. Those that remain have now quietly settled down as cultivators, but are far from being industrious.

The old people speak of the ancient times with great exultation, alloyed with regret, when they could muster two or three hundred, make raid into the neighbouring foreign states, return with a hundred head of cattle, which were immediately divided, and then disperse with the ill-gotten booty with extreme delight.

Habitat.—The Bhuttees are now found residing near the banks of the Ghuggur, and Choyea in the Sirsa district, also in the Hissar district.

Present occupation.—Agriculturists; but formerly known for their marauding propensities.

* *تھوک*—*थोक*, divisions, parties.

Religion.—Mahomedan.

Character.—Indolent formerly, but are now inclined to earn their livelihood by a reluctant field labour.

Diet.—Animals and vegetables.

Use of Narcotics.—They smoke tobacco in a leathern hooka. Those who live on the borders of Bicaneer, indulge in the use of opium.

Longevity.—About 80 years.

Physical Conformation.—Dark brown complexion, wear the jet black hair down to the shoulder, do not shave the whiskers nor moustache; low in the mental scale, and of inferior capacity; and the average height 5 feet, 9 inches.

Dress.—The males wear large turbans of white cloth, a *thymund** or *tybund* of coarse cloth or coloured *loongee*, an *ungerkha* sometimes, and a chudder thrown over all. The females wear until married a *koortee†* and after marriage *ungeeah*, *ghugrah*, with large red prints, and a chudder thrown over the body, covering the head also.

Jauts.

جاٹو—जातू.

Origin.—Traditionally, the Jauts are the offspring of a Rajpoot father, and of an inferior caste of mother—a Sooder.

Division into Classes.—Jauts are divided into several *goths*, viz. : Bynewall, Goodharas, Sohos, &c. They are of two descriptions, the *Dehsee* or settled, and *Bagrees* or wandering. The former has no real caste, but is only a modified Rajpoot.

Habitat.—Bhutteanah and Hissar districts. This tribe is also seen in Kurnaul, but there many have become Mahomedans.

Habit.—Peaceful and settled.

Occupation.—This class confines itself to agricultural pursuits, and may enlist themselves in the Infantry or Cavalry regiments.

Religion.—Hindus. They pray to Ram, their chief object of devotion. Their widows are not allowed to return to their own family, but are married to their next brother-in-law, or the nephew.

Character.—Hard working, truthful, and very thrifty. They make good soldiers, being brave, and not much troubled with caste prejudices.

* *تیمندر*, a broad flowing sheet extending to the ankles and tied at the waist.

† *کورٹی*, waistcoat or jacket for females.

Diet.—They principally live on cereals and vegetables; sometimes eat goat meat. The Sikh Jauts eat better and live well.

Use of Narcotics.—Some Jauts serving as peons in the Jehsul Police &c. add churrus to the tobacco they use for smoking. The higher class use in the proportion of 1 seer of tobacco leaf, to 4 chittacks of goor, and well pounded together. Opium is also used by this class, particularly those residing towards the boundary of Bicaneer territory. They also, without hesitation, drink country spirits.

Longevity.—60 years.

Physical Conformation.—Coppery complexion; iris dark; conjunctivæ yellowish; they are tall, erect, manly, and robust; their limbs are well shaped; features regular, countenance placid and dignified.

Dress.—The men wear *lengota** or kutch, koortap† and *khesh* or chudder, white or coloured turban. The females use chudder, koortee, trowsers and ghugrah. The last is generally dyed red or yellow and is either striped or dotted.

Rajpoots.

राजपूत—राजपूत.

Origin.—Having been driven out of the Jyepoor territory by Sahabooddeen of the Ghoree dynasty about Sumbut 1234 (A. D. 1177) the Rajpoots took possession of all the district now comprising Hissar, Hansee and Bhewannee pergunnahs.

Feroze Shah in 1371 first began to convert them by force, with more or less success, till the time of Aurungzeb, but this effort was relinquished on the decline of the Mahomedan power.

The independence of the Rajpoots of course was always in inverse ratio to the power of the Dehli potentates. All the Jatu tribes of Bhewannee revolted in 1809, and the town was stormed, and taken by the British troops.

The Rajpoots—Hindus and Mussulman converts—still remain in the proportion of 75 villages or about one quarter of what they formerly consisted of.

Division into Classes.—It is needless here detailing that the Raj-

* *لنگوتا*, a small narrow slip of cloth passed between the thighs and tucked into a waistbelt before and behind.

† *کوٹہ*, a jacket or waistcoat.

poots or Raj-pootras, form one of the highest castes of Hindu religion, belonging to the prince or military order.

Habit.—They are spread over the Hissar district, their principal residence being Bhewanee, Rysoo, and Dhymull. They reside also in the Bhutteana district, chiefly on the borders of the Bicaner territory.

Habit.—Mostly cultivators. As a class they are brave and proud.

Occupation.—Although particularly fond of land, yet they are indifferent agriculturists. They furnish few men to the Irregular Cavalry.

Religion.—Hindu; Ramchundra is their chief object of worship.

Character.—Domineering, and careful of what they call *izzut*. They are generally addicted to highway robberies, and cattle-thieving; careless of money; decidedly brave.

Diet.—They eat vegetables and all sorts of animals, and pork with delight, but not beef.

Use of Narcotics.—They smoke tobacco, and use opium freely, particularly those living near the Bicaner territory. They do not hesitate to imbibe fermented liquors.

Longevity.—About 60 years.

Physical Conformation.—Dark, or fairish; iris dark, and the conjunctivæ pretty clean; tall, well formed; having regular features, and well limbed.

Dress.—Usually a red turban is used, white ungerkha, and dhotee of various colours, but they are partially red.

Rahees.

راہی—राहि.

Origin.—Rahee or Raheen, a denomination said to have been derived from a Punjabee word signifying a gardener, or tiller of the soil, and it is said to be so styled from the following circumstance: The town and citadel of Dach, having fallen into the hands of certain parties who had besieged it, they issued orders for a general massacre, but the labourers, cultivators, and artizans were to be exempted; hereupon the Rahees who bore arms resorted to a device, by which their lives were spared, each threw away his weapon, and in its stead carried on his back a plough, or some implement of husbandry, and hence the appellation which up to this day they bear.

It appears that the territory comprised between Bhutneer in the Bicaner territory, and Futteeabad in the Hissar district, was inhabited from the earliest time by a set of people known under the general name of Rahees, one portion of whom is said to have emigrated from Sindh, and another from Jesselmeer. In its prosperous state this tract contained 1860 villages, with a corresponding population, addicted to agricultural and pastoral pursuits, but in consequence of constant depredations, at a later period by the Bhuttees, and the anarchy and confusion that resulted, the greater part of the population were led gradually to leave the country, some emigrated into Bareilly and others settled in Pasya.

Division into Classes.—None.

Habitat.—This tribe is to be found near the banks of the Sutledge and Ghugger streams; in different parts of the Punjab, and also in the Rohileund district.

Habit.—Strictly cultivators.

Occupation.—Their principal occupation is husbandry, but they are prone to follow any form of agricultural pursuits.

Religion.—Mahomedan and Hindu converts.

Character.—Docile, religious, but were migratory before to evade persecution, hence the reason of their being so scattered.

Diet.—The Mahomedan portion enjoy animal and vegetable food, but the Hindus avoid the former.

Use of Narcotics.—They smoke tobacco only.

Longevity.—About 50 years.

Physical Conformation.—The same as the Bhuttees.

Dress.—Ditto ditto.

Ranghurs.

Origin.—They are Rajpoot Mussulmans.

Division into Classes.—They are divided into 3 tribes, Jaut, Sutrolah and Ragoo.

Habitat.—Hissar district; and their chief villages are Bullealee, Bas, and Loharroo.

Habit.—Cultivators.

Occupation.—Fond of agriculture, but they are poor, many prefer taking service in the Irregular Cavalry.

Religion.—Mahomedans.

Character.—Brave but violent, and proud of their honour, to which they cling tenaciously.

Diet.—They live on animal and vegetable food.

Use of Narcotics.—They smoke the huka only, and abstain from the use of spirituous liquor.

Longevity.—About 55 years.

Physical Conformation.—Complexion varies much from dark to coppery; iris chiefly dark, and the conjunctivæ frequently yellowish; active and full of fire. They are erect, tall, manly and robust; their limbs well shaped; their features regular, and countenance dignified, stern, with an air of heroism and bravery. Their hair raven, and flows down to the shoulders. Average height 5 feet 11 inches. They are on the whole a very superior set of people to look at.

Dress.—Their usual dress is white or red turban; red dopattas, trowsers, merzai, and chudder.

Vishnus.

विष्णुव. — ویشنو

Origin.—Sprung into existence about A. D. 1485, or about 50 years before the foundation of the Sikh religion. Its founder was Jambajee before the foundation of the Sikh religion. Its founder was Jambajee of Peepassur in Bicaneer. They are the followers of Vishnu.

Mode of Worship.—Their mode of worship is to present offering at the shrine, and uttering prayers whilst bathing. Its tenets are to abstain entirely from animal food, to bathe before meals, and to marry none but those of their own persuasion. It is contained in a book called *Jambajee ka banee*, meaning Jambajee's discourse. They salute each other by expressing *neom-salam*, i. e., I salute you most respectfully, the rejoinder is *Jambajee ko*, signifying, May your salutation be acceptable to Jambajee. They convert others by shaving off the *chontí*. They bury their dead bodies in a cow-yard, or close to their place of residence. Their great temple is at Sameerah Dhul in Bicaneer, from which place it is said their first leader took his flight to heaven.

Habitat.—They inhabit Hissar, the neighbouring district of Sirsa; the adjoining foreign territories, and also portions of the North-Western Provinces.

Habit.—Principally cultivators.

Occupation.—Besides using agriculture, they are also good carpenters, and carriers or trainers of camels.

Religion.—Hindus, worshippers of Vishnu.

Character.—Civil and industrious.

Diet.—Chiefly vegetables. They do not touch meat, and as far as possible they never allow any animal or bird to be slaughtered or shot in their neighbourhood.

Use of Narcotics.—The Vishnus use no narcotics. They neither smoke, nor drink any fermented liquor. Such is their aversion, that they consider it a sacrilege to allow fire from their hearth for the purpose of smoking.

Longevity.—About 60 years.

Physical Conformation.—Rather dark, but yellow predominating. The iris dark or grey, sometimes greenish. The conjunctivæ generally yellowish. Average height 6 feet.

Dress.—The males wear coloured chudder of wool or *loe*,* a pugree, ungerkha and dhotee. The females use coloured woollen dhablah generally of purple colour, and red border, and they always wear shoes.

Wuttoos.

Origin.—Allied to the Bhuttees.

Habitat.—Banks of the river Sutledge in the Bhutteana district, also in the Ferozepore, and Montgomery districts, and in the Bhawalpore territory.

Habit.—Settled and fond of agriculture.

Occupation.—Indolent previously, but now they are inclined to be laborious.

Religion.—Mahomedan.

Character.—Submissive and industrious.

Diet.—Animal and vegetable food.

Use of Narcotics.—They smoke the *huka* only.

Longevity.—About 80 years.

Physical Conformation.—Complexion light brown, black flowing hair, iris black, wear thick beard and moustache; some are well built, tall, strong and able-bodied. Average height 5 feet, 10 inches.

Dress.—Turban, dhotee or tymund, and chudder, generally checked, or striped white and blue.

* لوي — لود, blanket or kambal کمال — कम्बल.